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Book 1915

## MINIMUM WAGE BILL.

MAY 23, 1916.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

*H. D. Long House*  
Mr. NOLAN, from the Committee on Labor, submitted the following

## REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 11876.]

The Committee on Labor, to which was referred the bill (H. R. 11876) introduced by Mr. Nolan to fix the compensation of certain employees of the United States, having considered the same, report thereon with the recommendation that it pass with the following amendments:

Page 1, line 3, strike out the words "June thirtieth, nineteen hundred and sixteen," and insert in lieu thereof the words "the beginning of the first fiscal year following the passage of this act."

Page 1, line 4, strike out the word "pay" and insert in lieu thereof the word "compensation."

Page 1, line 4, after the words "United States" insert "or by the Government of the District of Columbia."

Page 1, line 5, after the semicolon following the words "per day," insert "or if employed by the hour, not less than thirty-seven and one-half cents per hour";

Page 1, line 11, after the word "compensation" insert before the period a comma and the words "nor to persons holding appointments as postmasters."

Page 1, the following proviso to be inserted to go at the end of the first section of the bill: "*Provided further*, That the provisions of this act shall apply only to those persons who have been continuously in the employ of the Government of the United States, or in the employ



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of the Government of the District of Columbia, for a period of not less than two years, and who shall have attained the age of twenty years."

Page 1, lines 12, 13, and 14, to be stricken out.

Page 2, lines 1 to 15, inclusive, to be stricken out.

Page 2, line 16, that section 3 be renumbered section 2.

The bill as originally introduced contained three sections and reads as follows:

A BILL To fix the compensation of certain employees of the United States.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That after June thirtieth, nineteen hundred and sixteen, the minimum pay of any person employed by the United States shall be not less than \$3 per day; or if employed by the month, not less than \$90 per month; or if employed by the year, not less than \$1,080 per annum: *Provided,* That the provisions of this act shall not apply to persons enlisted in the military branches of the Government nor to persons receiving quarters and subsistence in addition to their compensation.

SEC. 2. That all employees of the United States as defined in section one of this bill who are now receiving compensation at the rate of more than \$1,080 per annum shall receive an increase of five per centum of the amount they are now receiving each year for the next four years, making, in all, a net increase of twenty per centum: *Provided,* That any employee who may receive an increase of compensation under section one of this act which shall amount to more than twenty per centum shall not be included under the provisions of this section; but any employee who shall receive an increase under section one of this act which does not amount to twenty per centum of the compensation he now receives, that brings his compensation up to the minimum amount specified in section one, shall receive a yearly increase in compensation of five per centum of the amount he now receives until the total increase shall aggregate not less than twenty per centum of the compensation he now receives.

SEC. 3. That upon the passage of this act the heads of departments in which are employed persons as defined in section one of this bill shall issue new appointments at the increased rate of compensation herein provided.

The amended bill contains but two sections and reads as follows:

A BILL To fix the compensation of certain employees of the United States.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That after the beginning of the first fiscal year following the passage of this act, the minimum compensation of any person employed by the United States or by the government of the District of Columbia shall be not less than \$3 per day; or if employed by the hour, not less than 37½ cents per hour; or if employed by the month, not less than \$90 per month; or if employed by the year, not less than \$1,080 per annum: *Provided,* That the provisions of this act shall not apply to persons enlisted in the military branches of the Government nor to persons receiving quarters and subsistence in addition to their compensation, nor to persons holding appointments as postmasters: *Provided further,* That the provisions of this act shall apply only to those persons who have been continuously in the employ of the Government of the United States, or in the employ of the government of the District of Columbia, for a period of not less than two years, and who shall have attained the age of 20 years.

SEC. 2. That upon the passage of this act the heads of departments in which are employed persons as defined in section one of this bill shall issue new appointments at the increased rate of compensation herein provided.

The bill was referred to a subcommittee of the Committee on Labor, consisting of Messrs. Maher, Nolan, Van Dyke, and Denison, and public hearings were held thereon from March 20, 1916, to April 5, 1916.

There appeared personally before the subcommittee representatives of the American Federation of Labor, the Maryland State Federation of Labor, Federation of Civil Service Employees of the port of San Francisco, the Federal Employees' Union of the District of Columbia,

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the National Federation of Post Office Clerks, the United National Association of Post Office Clerks, the National Association of Letter Carriers, the National League of Government Employees, the National Association of United States Civil Service Employees at Navy Yards, the Consumers' League of the District of Columbia, all of which organizations most earnestly indorsed the bill. There also appeared committees and individuals representing the laborers, watchmen, messengers, and various other low-salaried employees in the various branches of the Government service, including the White House, the Government Printing Office, the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, the Smithsonian Institution, the National Museum, Arlington National Cemetery, Public Buildings and Grounds, as well as the several navy yards of the United States. The testimony of these witnesses is printed in full in the report of the hearings of the subcommittee and presents the necessity for immediate remedial legislation in a most striking manner.

The following statement, showing the estimated cost of living for a family of five, was submitted by Mr. Arthur E. Holder, representing the American Federation of Labor. The figures are worthy of close study, being based on the conditions existing to-day. Mr. Holder's figures show that it takes \$767.95 a year to provide the bare necessities of life for a family of five, making no allowance whatever for doctors, medicine, insurance, lodge dues, newspapers, church contributions, or amusements, and the cost for food is based on 5 cents a meal. Mr. Holder's figures of 5 cents per meal per person is not given as the actual cost, but merely suggested as the lowest possible estimate.

ESTIMATED MINIMUM COST OF BARE EXISTENCE FOR HUSBAND, WIFE, AND THREE CHILDREN FOR A YEAR OF 365 DAYS.

[By Arthur E. Holder.]

Food:	
3 meals per day for 5 persons at 5 cents per meal each, equals 75 cents per day; for 365 days.....	\$273. 75
Rent:	
House or rooms, at \$20 per month.....	240. 00
Water:	
50 cents per month.....	6. 00
Clothes:	
2 suits for husband (no overcoat), at \$15 each.....	30. 00
3 suits of underclothes, at \$1 per suit.....	3. 00
1 suit for wife, with cloak.....	25. 00
3 suits of underclothes, at \$1 per suit.....	3. 00
Clothes for 3 children, at \$10 each.....	30. 00
Underclothes for children, stockings, etc.....	9. 00
2 pairs shoes for husband, 2 pairs for wife, at \$2.50 per pair.....	10. 00
2 pairs each for 3 children, at \$2 per pair.....	12. 00
Repairs for shoes for year (no rubbers).....	3. 00
Heat and light:	
Gas for light and cooking, at \$2 per month.....	24. 00
Coal, 7 tons, at \$7 per ton.....	49. 00
Household needs:	
Soap for laundry and bathing, 10 cents per week.....	5. 20
Matches, firewood, replacing broken crockery ware, cooking utensils, etc., per year.....	10. 00

## Household needs—Continued.

New bedding, tablecloths, matting, rugs, other floor covering, and replacing broken or worn-out furniture, per year.....	\$20. 00
Towels, window shades, other minor but essential articles for household and family wear, such as hats, caps, wraps, umbrellas, etc., classed as miscellaneous.....	15. 00
Total cost of bare existence for family during year.....	767. 95

It will be noticed that no entry has been made for the following expenses, which are usually necessary:

Street cars.....	None.
Tobacco.....	None.
Whisky.....	None.
Other stimulants.....	None.
Candy.....	None.
School books and other school needs.....	None.
Church expense.....	None.
Newspapers, magazines, etc.....	None.
Theaters, movies, excursions, social or church parties.....	None.
Insurance, lodge dues, trade unions.....	None.
Postage and stationery for correspondence.....	None.
Cost of births.....	None.
Cost of deaths.....	None.
Cost of sickness, medicine.....	None.
Cost of accidents or lawsuits.....	None.

Families who are shackled by the iron laws of economic necessity on an income of \$720 per year can indulge in no extravagance, not even the necessary luxuries above enumerated. Their lives are circumscribed within the limits of a bare existence, for which there is no hope, no promise, no future.

Prof. Keen, of the University of Washington, a national authority, conducted extensive investigations, and some time ago estimated \$840 for absolute necessities. The prices have advanced since that estimate was made and are still going higher.

Scores of Government employees in different sections of the United States, as well as many of those employed here in Washington, submitted itemized statements of living expenses. In many instances these people stated they were dependent upon charity to make both ends meet. And in the printed record of the hearings testimony can be found of dozens of cases where the low-paid Government employee is forced to seek employment after hours and during his vacation period in order that he may make provision for the bare existence of his family.

In connection with the rise in prices of commodities generally consumed by the lower-paid employees in the District of Columbia and elsewhere, the subcommittee requested Mr. Ethelbert Stewart, chief statistician of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Department of Labor, to submit for the information of the committee and of Congress statistics covering a period of years from 1890 to date. Mr. Stewart also submitted at the request of the subcommittee statistics showing the purchasing value of \$1 during the 26 years from 1890 to 1915. These statistics were gathered in 45 cities, the United States being divided into five geographical divisions. These statistics show the rise in prices has been general and not confined to any particular section of the United States.

Mr. Stewart's statement before the subcommittee and the statistics he submitted follow:



## STATEMENT OF MR. ETHELBERT STEWART, CHIEF STATISTICIAN BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.

Mr. STEWART. I have here the prices of certain foodstuffs in the city of Washington from 1890 down to and including 1915. This material is secured by the Bureau of Labor Statistics monthly. In 1890 we had three grocery stores in Washington reporting to us monthly; in 1915 we had seven. In 1890 the average price of round steak in the store reporting the lowest rate was 12.4 cents per pound; that was the average for the year. The highest store reported 13.3 cents per pound. In 1915 the lowest store was 22.3 cents a pound, as against 12.4 in 1890. The highest store in 1915 was 27.5, as against 13.3 in 1890.

I have intentionally selected those things that would necessarily be used by the men who get \$60 a month as against those who get \$200. For instance, I have selected round steak instead of sirloin. That is the cheapest cut that we carry in our price list. Pork chops were 10 cents in 1890 and 22.1 cents in 1915. They were 19.5 in the cheapest store. In other words, the price practically doubled. Now, in the salary grades of which you speak there has been no increase, if we take our own bureau as an example.

The man who comes in at \$660 per annum is practically barred by the civil-service regulations from ever getting any more. He can not take an examination for the subclerical positions, and the jobs for which the pay is \$660 per annum are held to-day by the same men who went into them years ago. One man at \$660 has been there as long as I have. I have been in the bureau since 1887, a period of 29 years.

The other positions work this way: We take a man in at \$1,000. While that is always the entrance salary for that particular job, yet that person can go up. In other words, while the salary for the job remains the same, the job is not always held by the same person. In these \$660 per annum positions that can not be done. So when we say the price of pork chops has increased 100 per cent since one of these men took one of these positions it means that he has had absolutely no means to meet that increase unless he has other members of the family whom he can put to work to help augment the income.

To continue price quotations, wheat flour, one-eighth of a barrel, or approximately 24 pounds, cost 84 cents in 1890, while in 1900 it cost \$1.14. Eggs have increased from 22 cents to 36.5 cents. That is the average price for the year in Washington, of course.

Butter has increased from 29.5 cents to 39.3, while sugar has increased from 5.5 to 6.3.

Mr. NOLAN. Those are the averages for the year?

Mr. STEWART. Yes, sir; those are the averages for the year. That is the average of the monthly statements from each store.

I would like to submit for your record, in case you want to examine the details more fully, this detailed table of cost, and also this shorter table, which gives the highest and lowest prices, by five-year periods, from 1890 to 1915.

*Average retail prices of certain specified articles of food in Washington, D. C., in each year from 1890 to 1915, inclusive, by firms.*

Year.	Round steak, per pound.	Pork chops, per pound.	Ham, smoked, per pound.	Lard, pure, per pound.	Flour, wheat, per one-eighth barrel bag.	Potatoes, Irish, per peck.	Eggs, per dozen.	Butter, creamery, per pound.	Sugar, granulated, per pound.
1890.....	\$0.124	\$0.100	\$0.138	\$0.100	\$1.000	\$0.271	\$0.240	\$0.308	\$0.055
	.125		.138	.100	.951	.254	.220	.295	.067
	.133		.134	.110	.843	.296	.232	.338	.074
1891.....	.138	.100	.140	.100	1.009	.308	.246	.329	.051
	.125		.136	.100	.973	.300	.249	.304	.050
	.134		.150	.100	.968	.308	.267	.329	.057
1892.....	.120	.100	.140	.102	.933	.279	.242	.350	.051
	.125		.136	.103	.958	.241	.238	.308	.049
	.117		.146	.107	.899	.258	.252	.350	.053
1893.....	.120	.100	.153	.140	1.000	.296	.236	.346	.054
	.125		.156	.118	.916	.313	.225	.307	.055
	.116		.138	.143	.909	.300	.234	.342	.057
1894.....	.120	.100	.145	.115	.808	.258	.218	.338	.051

*Average retail prices of certain specified articles of food in Washington, D. C., in each year from 1890 to 1915, inclusive, by firms—Continued.*

Year.	Round steak, per pound.	Pork chops, per pound.	Ham, smoked, per pound.	Lard, pure, per pound.	Flour, wheat, per one- eighth barrel bag.	Pota- toes, Irish, per peck.	Eggs, per dozen.	Butter, cream- ery, per pound.	Sugar, granu- lated, per pound.
1894.....	\$0.125		\$0.135	\$0.100	\$0.821	\$0.300	\$0.225	\$0.302	\$0.052
	.110		.133	.125	.933	.279	.233	.338	.050
1895.....	.120	\$0.125	.135	.100	.784	.263	.208	.313	.053
	.125		.130	.100	.755	.238	.208	.316	.048
	.116		.140	.120	.742	.283	.228	.317	.050
1896.....	.119	.125	.133	.100	.870	.254	.205	.304	.053
	.125		.130	.100	.762	.219	.208	.298	.051
	.120		.142	.103	.801	.250	.195	.313	.055
1897.....	.112	.125	.136	.100	.909	.258	.203	.294	.053
	.125		.134	.090	.867	.250	.207	.283	.050
	.120		.150	.094	.870	.246	.179	.303	.053
1898.....	.125	.125	.133	.100	.941	.246	.205	.282	.057
	.125		.129	.085	.904	.275	.218	.273	.056
	.126		.139	.100	.916	.313	.199	.300	.058
1899.....	.143	.125	.128	.100	.755	.250	.214	.313	.056
	.125		.135	.088	.808	.267	.236	.282	.056
	.147		.133	.100	.821	.279	.202	.321	.060
1900.....	.154	.125	.146	.105	.760	.258	.228	.321	.057
	.125		.142	.099	.801	.279	.219	.288	.058
	.150		.145	.104	.826	.267	.215	.321	.063
1901.....	.150	.150	.152	.122	.750	.267	.243	.313	.058
	.130		.153	.122	.767	.300	.235	.297	.058
	.150		.143	.123	.801	.308	.244	.321	.060
1902.....	.158	.150	.151	.138	.750	.279	.274	.329	.050
	.150		.164	.137	.750	.283	.266	.318	.050
	.168		.143	.142	.796	.321	.259	.333	.055
1903.....	.153	.150	.170	.138	.750	.246	.274	.317	.053
	.150		.180	.130	.767	.300	.252	.324	.054
	.150		.150	.145	.801	.325	.255	.325	.055
1904.....	.152	.144	.200	.130	.892	.271	.288	.313	.053
	.150	.140	.160	.124	.892	.333	.271	.321	.052
	.140	.143	.200	.130	.904	.300	.276	.338	.055
1905.....	.153	.141	.228	.122	.950	.250	.274	.323	.061
	.144	.141	.158	.120	.956	.281	.263	.323	.059
	.152	.146	.200	.126	.968	.269	.276	.333	.063
1906.....	.154	.157	.250	.129	.896	.278	.286	.330	.054
	.150	.162	.172	.126	.900	.300	.280	.336	.050
	.153	.164	.225	.128	.903	.279	.287	.332	.053
1907.....	.155	.160	.232	.130	.858	.250	.288	.363	.054
	.155	.163	.250	.133	.850	.258	.257	.333	.057
	.153	.160		.137	.883	.265	.277	.350	.055
1908.....		.160							
	.170	.150	.275	.138	.933	.250	.258	.347	.056
	.173	.168	.250	.135	.900	.267	.270	.315	.058
	.172	.160		.135	.900	.258		.355	.058
1909.....		.160							
	.180	.162	.300	.160	.983	.275	.318	.373	.053
	.180	.187	.258	.148	1.000	.267	.287	.330	.055
	.165	.200		.147	.983	.292	.300	.370	.055
1910.....		.180							
	.193	.185	.300	.180	.950	.217	.328	.393	.055
	.180	.228	.250	.173	1.000	.232	.310	.348	.057
	.193	.213	.170	.187	1.000	.242	.292	.382	.057
	.166	.187	.197	.150	.900	.242	.300	.375	.057
	.180	.182	.250	.178	1.000	.250		.375	.059
	.160	.197	.180	.168	1.000	.292		.385	.055
	.150	.220				.250		.313	
1911.....		.190	.300	.133	.929	.308	.268	.354	.061
	.180	.190	.250	.125	.908	.350	.261	.346	.060
	.188	.168	.156	.130	.933	.288	.275	.347	.060
	.163	.192	.178	.132	.900	.383	.291	.350	.059
	.183	.165	.240	.137	1.000	.307		.344	.061
	.158	.173	.175	.131	.988	.342		.337	.061
	.164	.186				.346		.355	
1912.....		.200	.300	.143	.942	.329	.312	.396	.060
	.208	.199	.250	.138	.950	.313	.307	.377	.058
	.178	.205	.165	.139	.913	.308	.303	.380	.058
	.218	.178	.173	.134	.929	.342	.319	.387	.063
	.180	.197	.249	.135	1.000	.342	.334	.381	.060
	.195	.210	.200	.148	1.000	.342		.390	.060
	.228	.203	.300	.144					

<sup>1</sup> Whole.

<sup>2</sup> Sliced.



*Average retail prices of certain specified articles of food in Washington, D. C., in each year from 1890 to 1915, inclusive, by firms—Continued.*

Year.	Round steak, per pound.	Pork chops, per pound.	Ham, smoked, per pound.	Lard, pure, per pound.	Flour, wheat, per one-eighth barrel bag.	Potatoes, Irish, per peck.	Eggs, per dozen.	Butter, creamery, per pound.	Sugar, granulated, per pound.
1913.....	\$0.258	\$0.208	\$0.300	\$0.152	\$0.896	\$0.246	\$0.309	\$0.417	\$0.051
	.231	.210	.264	.144	.950	.233	.308	.405	.051
	.213	.213	.195	.148	.896	.259	.296	.391	.049
	.244	.227	.201	.142	.815	.261	.318	.408	.052
	.212	.218	.195	.148	1.000	.300	.293	.398	.050
	.222	.224	.214	.155	.975	.280	.343	.404	.052
	.253	.228	.1313	.150	.900	.290	.297	.411	.051
	.234	.205	.1297	.148	.....	.288	.....	.....	.....
1914.....	.268	.216	.1300	.141	.950	.282	.333	.395	.056
	.254	.233	.1270	.139	.967	.275	.317	.383	.054
	.236	.233	.1191	.145	.933	.280	.338	.378	.055
	.258	.218	.1193	.140	.908	.282	.333	.383	.058
	.242	.227	.1301	.142	.958	.291	.319	.375	.057
	.237	.224	.1210	.149	1.033	.297	.354	.388	.056
	.273	.241	.1323	.150	.958	.320	.334	.385	.056
	.230	.218	.1300	.146	.....	.296	.....	.....	.....
1915.....	.253	.203	.1300	.131	1.075	.218	.315	.393	.063
	.247	.213	.1272	.128	1.125	.189	.308	.378	.060
	.227	.212	.1183	.129	1.050	.225	.321	.383	.060
	.247	.195	.1187	.128	1.088	.214	.317	.383	.063
	.240	.211	.1300	.135	1.092	.205	.291	.374	.060
	.223	.198	.1191	.124	1.144	.217	.364	.376	.062
	.275	.221	.1350	.138	.....	.263	.....	.....	.....

<sup>1</sup> Sliced.

<sup>2</sup> Whole.

*Highest and lowest average retail prices of certain specified articles of food, Washington, D. C., in 5-year intervals, from 1890 to 1915.*

Year.	Round steak, per pound.	Pork chops, per pound.	Ham, smoked, per pound.	Lard, pure, per pound.	Flour, wheat, per one-eighth barrel bag.	Potatoes, Irish, per peck.	Eggs, per dozen.	Butter, creamery, per pound.	Sugar, granulated, per pound.
1890.....	\$0.124	\$0.100	\$0.134	\$0.100	\$0.843	\$0.254	\$0.220	\$0.295	\$0.055
	.133	.....	.138	.110	1.000	.296	.240	.338	.074
1895.....	.116	.125	.130	.100	.742	.238	.208	.313	.048
	.125	.....	.140	.120	.784	.283	.228	.317	.053
1900.....	.125	.125	.142	.099	.760	.258	.215	.288	.057
	.151	.....	.146	.105	.826	.279	.228	.321	.063
1905.....	.144	.141	.158	.120	.950	.250	.263	.323	.059
	.153	.146	.....	.126	.968	.281	.276	.333	.063
1910.....	.150	.182	.170	.150	.900	.217	.292	.313	.055
	.193	.228	.197	.187	1.000	.292	.325	.393	.059
1915.....	.223	.195	.183	.124	1.050	.189	.291	.374	.060
	.275	.221	.191	.138	1.144	.263	.364	.393	.063

Mr. NOLAN. That small table refers to commodities that are more likely to be used by the lower-paid employees in the District of Columbia?

Mr. STEWART. Yes, sir. For instance, instead of taking sirloin steak, I have taken round steak; instead of taking a fancy roast cut, we have taken the cheapest steak that we can buy; and we have taken pork chops, and so on. Vegetables, of course, are bought by everyone at practically the same price.

I believe that, so far as the cost of living is concerned, these are all the official figures that I can furnish you at this time. I know that rents are increasing very rapidly in the District of Columbia. For a number of years they were quite high and then there was a slump, but certainly at the present time they have recovered from that slump and are very much on the up grade.

Mr. NOLAN. Are they higher to-day than ever before in the District of Columbia?

Mr. STEWART. My impression is that they are, but there was a boom time here when they were very high. Most of my official connection with the bureau has been as a field man. My family was not in Washington, so that I am not the best authority on

that subject; but my impression is that the rents are now very much in advance of the boom time that they had here several years ago.

Mr. LONDON. I think the committee would be greatly aided by having references to the original sources from which this data may be obtained and made a part of the record. We will be called upon on the floor of the House to sustain this data, and it will be desirable to have access to the original sources from which this data relating to the cost of living has been obtained.

Mr. STEWART. I will have to say this, Mr. Chairman, that the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in securing its information from firms, obtains that under pledge that it will be treated purely as confidential, so far as the source of information is concerned.

Mr. NOLAN. You mean so far as the names are concerned?

Mr. STEWART. Yes, sir.

Mr. NOLAN. That is understood.

Mr. STEWART. This information comes from three firms in 1890. That is all we had at that time. Those are all the firms we took at that time. The 1915 figures are from seven stores.

Mr. LONDON. Including the original three?

Mr. STEWART. I think they do include the original three.

Mr. LONDON. I am very much interested in tracing the cost of living and in getting the original sources, not only in connection with this particular bill, but along other lines. Can you help us in this matter? What sources would you look to for this information?

Mr. STEWART. The Bureau of Labor Statistics instructed its agents in selecting these firms to take neither the fancy store nor the cut-rate store—the store that cuts and slashes prices. You never know at what price they are going to sell a thing. They sell it at one price one day and another the next. The agents were instructed to take the substantial stores of medium grade, where the ordinary skilled working people trade.

Mr. NOLAN. I presume, Mr. Stewart, that the retail prices are fixed according to market prices?

Mr. STEWART. Yes, sir; presumably. In other words, we would not take a store that runs as a leader a thing like granulated sugar, for instance, and undertook to cut the price of sugar, because the next day they would not have the same price, and our figures would be entirely thrown out of plumb by these freak figures.

Mr. NOLAN. The figures you have given here relate to the District of Columbia exclusively?

Mr. STEWART. Yes, sir.

Mr. NOLAN. You have had a great deal of experience in collecting statistics on the cost of living throughout the country?

Mr. STEWART. Yes, sir.

Mr. NOLAN. How do the figures in Washington, regarding the rise in prices, compare with the country generally? Has the same percentage of increase been observed generally throughout the country?

Mr. STEWART. I would much prefer, if you will permit me, to submit as a part of my statement the exact figures on that. I can give you the increases, taking the country as a whole.

Mr. NOLAN. I wish you would do that.

Mr. STEWART. My impression is that Washington is going up rather faster than most of the cities, but there are probably some cities that are going up as fast as or faster than Washington, so far as the country as a whole is concerned. I would prefer to submit the exact figures.

Mr. NOLAN. I wish you would, and we will incorporate them in your testimony for the benefit of the committee and the House.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,  
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS,  
*Washington, April 5, 1916.*

HON. JOHN I. NOLAN,  
*House of Representatives, Washington, D. C.*

DEAR MR. NOLAN: During my testimony before the House Committee on Labor on your bill to establish a minimum wage for Government employees and to increase the salaries of employees I submitted the retail price in Washington of a number of articles for a series of years. During that testimony you asked me for similar figures for the country as a whole. It is, of course, impossible to give you the same detail as was given for Washington in a reasonable space. I therefore constructed tables for the items covered in my testimony to show, for instance, the number of pounds of round steak that \$1 would buy by the five general divisions of the United States

and for the United States as a whole. On separate sheets I have shown the same facts for pork chops, smoked ham, lard, one-eighth barrel sacks of wheat flour, a dozen eggs, pounds of butter, pecks of Irish potatoes, and sugar by the pound.

I should say, in explanation, that the Bureau of Labor Statistics secures prices from 45 cities in 34 different States at the present time. While this will, perhaps, not hold good on each article back to 1890, yet a fairly representative number of cities were taken throughout the period. The 45 cities for which prices are being secured at this time have been grouped into five geographical divisions, as follows:

North Atlantic division: Boston, Mass.; Buffalo, N. Y.; Fall River, Mass.; Manchester, N. H.; Newark, N. J.; New Haven, Conn.; New York, N. Y.; Philadelphia, Pa.; Pittsburgh, Pa.; Providence, R. I.; Schenectady, N. Y.; Scranton, Pa.

South Atlantic division: Atlanta, Ga.; Baltimore, Md.; Charleston, S. C.; Charleston, W. Va.; Jacksonville, Fla.; Richmond, Va.; Washington, D. C.

North Central division: Chicago, Ill.; Cincinnati, Ohio; Cleveland, Ohio; Detroit, Mich.; Indianapolis, Ind.; Kansas City, Mo.; Milwaukee, Wis.; Minneapolis, Minn.; Omaha, Nebr.; St. Louis, Mo.; St. Paul, Minn.; Springfield, Ill.

South Central division: Birmingham, Ala.; Dallas, Tex.; El Paso, Tex.; Little Rock, Ark.; Louisville, Ky.; Memphis, Tenn.; New Orleans, La.

Western division: Butte, Mont.; Denver, Colo.; Los Angeles, Cal.; Portland, Oreg.; Salt Lake City, Utah; San Francisco, Cal.; Seattle, Wash.

Trusting that this will give your committee the information you requested, I am,

Very truly, yours,

ETHELBERT STEWART, *Chief Statistician.*

*Quantities of various commodities that could be bought at retail for \$1, 1890-1915.*

#### ROUND STEAK (POUND).

Year.	North Atlantic.	South Atlantic.	North Central.	South Central.	Western.	United States.
1890.....	6.5	8.6	9.3	8.9	8.4	8.1
1891.....	6.5	8.5	9.3	8.8	8.4	8.1
1892.....	6.5	8.7	9.3	8.9	8.5	8.1
1893.....	6.5	8.7	9.1	8.7	9.0	8.1
1894.....	6.6	8.7	9.3	8.6	9.4	8.2
1895.....	6.5	8.5	9.2	8.7	8.9	8.1
1896.....	6.5	8.6	9.2	8.5	8.8	8.1
1897.....	6.5	8.6	9.1	8.5	8.6	8.0
1898.....	6.4	8.3	8.9	8.3	8.4	7.9
1899.....	6.3	8.0	8.8	8.1	8.1	7.8
1900.....	6.2	7.7	8.5	7.8	8.1	7.6
1901.....	5.9	7.5	8.1	7.7	7.8	7.2
1902.....	5.5	7.2	7.7	7.0	7.5	6.8
1903.....	5.8	7.5	7.9	7.7	7.7	7.1
1904.....	5.7	7.5	7.9	7.8	7.6	7.1
1905.....	5.8	7.5	7.9	7.6	7.7	7.1
1906.....	5.7	7.1	7.6	7.5	7.6	6.9
1907.....	5.4	6.9	7.3	7.4	7.5	6.7
1908.....	5.3	6.5	6.4	6.8	7.2	6.4
1909.....	5.3	6.2	6.6	6.4	6.9	6.2
1910.....	5.1	5.8	6.1	6.3	6.4	5.8
1911.....	5.1	5.8	6.1	6.2	6.1	5.8
1912.....	4.5	5.2	5.3	5.6	5.2	5.1
1913.....	4.0	4.8	4.7	5.0	5.0	4.5
1914.....	3.7	4.5	4.4	4.8	4.9	4.3
1915.....	3.7	4.7	4.6	4.8	4.9	4.4

#### PORK CHOPS (POUNDS).

1890.....	9.3	10.0	10.6	8.7	8.5	9.3
1891.....	9.1	9.6	10.5	8.7	8.5	9.2
1892.....	9.0	9.5	10.2	8.7	8.4	9.0
1893.....	8.3	8.9	9.7	8.2	8.7	8.5
1894.....	8.8	9.3	13.2	8.4	8.7	8.9
1895.....	9.2	9.2	10.3	8.5	8.4	9.1
1896.....	9.4	9.3	10.4	8.5	8.5	9.3
1897.....	9.4	9.6	10.3	8.5	8.5	9.3
1898.....	9.3	9.3	10.1	8.6	8.8	9.2
1899.....	9.1	9.1	9.8	8.3	8.2	8.9
1900.....	8.5	8.7	9.3	8.1	7.9	8.4
1901.....	7.7	7.9	8.5	7.4	7.7	7.7
1902.....	7.1	7.0	7.9	6.7	7.2	7.1
1903.....	7.1	7.2	8.1	6.9	7.4	7.1
1904.....	7.2	7.4	8.3	7.2	7.4	7.3



*Quantities of various commodities that could be bought at retail for \$1, 1890-1915—*  
Continued.

## PORK CHOPS (POUNDS)—Continued.

Year.	North Atlantic.	South Atlantic.	North Central.	South Central.	Western.	United States.
1905.....	7.1	7.2	8.1	7.2	7.0	7.2
1906.....	6.6	6.6	7.4	6.6	6.6	6.6
1907.....	6.3	6.4	7.2	6.5	6.2	6.4
1908.....	6.3	6.3	6.9	6.3	6.1	6.2
1909.....	5.8	5.6	6.3	5.7	5.7	5.7
1910.....	5.3	5.1	5.7	5.2	5.0	5.2
1911.....	5.6	5.6	6.1	5.3	5.0	5.6
1912.....	5.1	5.2	5.6	5.1	4.9	5.2
1913.....	4.6	4.7	5.1	4.8	4.5	4.7
1914.....	4.4	4.5	4.9	4.5	4.3	4.5
1915.....	4.8	4.9	5.3	4.8	4.6	4.9

## SMOKED HAM (POUNDS).

1890.....	6.4	6.7	6.8	7.0	5.7	6.6
1891.....	6.5	6.6	6.7	6.8	5.6	6.5
1892.....	6.3	6.5	6.5	6.6	5.6	6.4
1893.....	5.7	6.3	6.0	6.5	5.2	6.0
1894.....	6.2	6.5	6.6	6.6	5.7	6.4
1895.....	6.5	6.6	6.8	6.8	6.1	6.6
1896.....	6.5	6.6	6.8	7.0	6.2	6.7
1897.....	6.5	6.6	6.8	6.8	6.2	6.6
1898.....	6.7	6.7	7.1	6.8	6.5	6.8
1899.....	6.4	6.6	6.8	6.7	6.1	6.5
1900.....	6.0	6.4	6.3	6.3	5.7	6.2
1901.....	5.7	6.1	6.0	6.1	5.6	5.9
1902.....	5.3	5.7	5.5	5.5	5.1	5.4
1903.....	5.2	5.6	5.5	5.3	5.1	5.3
1904.....	5.3	5.7	5.6	5.3	5.1	5.5
1905.....	5.4	5.7	5.6	5.3	5.1	5.5
1906.....	5.0	5.3	5.2	5.0	4.9	5.1
1907.....	4.9	5.0	5.2	4.8	4.6	5.0
1908.....	4.8	5.0	5.0	4.7	4.4	4.8
1909.....	4.7	4.6	4.7	4.3	4.2	4.6
1910.....	4.3	4.0	4.3	3.8	3.8	4.1
1911.....	4.3	4.3	4.4	3.8	3.8	4.2
1912.....	4.2	4.3	4.3	3.8	3.8	4.2
1913.....	3.8	4.0	3.8	3.5	3.5	3.8
1914.....	3.7	3.9	3.8	3.4	3.4	3.7
1915.....	3.9	4.1	3.9	3.6	3.5	3.9

## LARD (POUNDS).

1890.....	10.4	11.8	10.9	11.0	9.1	10.8
1891.....	10.2	11.6	10.8	10.8	8.8	10.6
1892.....	9.7	11.2	10.5	10.4	8.4	10.2
1893.....	8.4	9.7	9.5	9.2	7.7	8.9
1894.....	9.4	10.9	10.2	10.1	8.3	9.9
1895.....	10.1	11.9	10.6	11.5	8.8	10.5
1896.....	11.1	12.2	11.4	12.3	9.9	11.4
1897.....	11.6	12.7	11.5	12.7	10.2	11.8
1898.....	11.0	12.0	11.1	12.2	9.7	11.2
1899.....	10.8	11.6	10.6	11.5	9.6	10.9
1900.....	9.9	10.6	10.1	10.9	9.1	10.1
1901.....	8.7	9.3	9.0	9.3	8.3	8.9
1902.....	7.6	8.2	8.0	8.0	7.5	7.9
1903.....	8.0	8.5	8.6	9.0	7.6	8.3
1904.....	8.6	9.5	9.4	9.5	7.8	9.0
1905.....	8.7	9.6	9.4	9.5	7.8	9.1
1906.....	7.9	8.6	8.5	8.8	7.3	8.3
1907.....	7.6	8.0	8.1	8.4	7.0	7.9
1908.....	7.6	7.9	8.0	8.2	7.0	7.9
1909.....	6.8	6.9	7.0	7.2	6.4	7.0
1910.....	5.8	6.1	6.0	6.3	5.7	6.1
1911.....	7.2	7.4	7.1	7.3	6.6	7.1
1912.....	6.9	7.0	6.7	6.8	6.2	6.8
1913.....	6.5	6.6	6.3	6.5	5.7	6.3
1914.....	6.5	6.6	6.5	6.5	5.9	6.4
1915.....	7.0	6.9	6.8	6.8	6.1	6.8

Quantities of various commodities that could be bought at retail for \$1, 1890-1915—  
Continued.

WHEAT FLOUR ( $\frac{1}{2}$ -BARREL SACKS.)

Year.	North Atlantic.	South Atlantic.	North Central.	South Central.	Western.	United States.
1890.....	1.30	1.44	1.59	1.22	1.57	1.41
1891.....	1.28	1.42	1.54	1.22	1.47	1.37
1892.....	1.37	1.50	1.65	1.33	1.48	1.47
1893.....	1.49	1.55	1.83	1.47	1.76	1.61
1894.....	1.62	1.64	1.98	1.62	1.96	1.74
1895.....	1.62	1.65	1.93	1.60	2.02	1.73
1896.....	1.56	1.58	1.89	1.47	1.82	1.66
1897.....	1.39	1.49	1.65	1.29	1.55	1.48
1898.....	1.33	1.43	1.62	1.34	1.58	1.44
1899.....	1.52	1.55	1.85	1.47	1.87	1.63
1900.....	1.53	1.56	1.82	1.48	1.93	1.64
1901.....	1.54	1.55	1.80	1.45	1.94	1.63
1902.....	1.53	1.56	1.79	1.45	1.84	1.63
1903.....	1.43	1.49	1.70	1.42	1.61	1.52
1904.....	1.20	1.29	1.41	1.19	1.47	1.29
1905.....	1.19	1.27	1.44	1.20	1.44	1.29
1906.....	1.34	1.40	1.61	1.30	1.51	1.43
1907.....	1.22	1.32	1.46	1.22	1.37	1.31
1908.....	1.14	1.23	1.37	1.16	1.29	1.23
1909.....	1.08	1.14	1.24	1.05	1.19	1.15
1910.....	1.10	1.16	1.24	1.05	1.23	1.16
1911.....	1.15	1.23	1.32	1.13	1.37	1.23
1912.....	1.12	1.14	1.25	1.15	1.36	1.19
1913.....	1.22	1.16	1.34	1.15	1.37	1.25
1914.....	1.16	1.13	1.29	1.13	1.32	1.20
1915.....	.95	.95	1.05	.94	1.09	1.00

## EGGS (DOZEN).

1890.....	4.1	5.9	5.3	6.2	3.8	4.8
1891.....	3.9	5.6	5.0	5.8	3.7	4.5
1892.....	3.9	5.6	5.0	6.0	3.8	4.5
1893.....	3.8	5.6	4.9	6.0	3.9	4.5
1894.....	4.3	6.1	5.5	6.4	4.2	5.0
1895.....	4.1	6.0	5.3	6.1	4.2	4.9
1896.....	4.4	6.3	5.8	6.5	4.6	5.2
1897.....	4.5	6.4	6.0	6.5	4.4	5.3
1898.....	4.2	6.3	5.7	6.2	4.4	4.0
1899.....	4.0	6.0	5.4	6.0	4.2	4.8
1900.....	4.1	5.9	5.4	6.1	4.4	4.8
1901.....	3.9	5.6	5.1	5.5	4.2	4.6
1902.....	3.4	5.0	4.5	5.0	3.7	4.0
1903.....	3.3	4.7	4.3	4.6	3.5	3.9
1904.....	3.1	4.4	4.1	4.7	3.4	3.7
1905.....	3.1	4.3	4.1	4.6	3.3	3.7
1906.....	3.0	4.2	4.2	4.4	3.2	3.6
1907.....	3.0	4.2	4.1	4.2	3.0	3.5
1908.....	2.9	4.2	3.9	3.9	2.9	3.4
1909.....	2.7	3.8	3.6	3.6	2.8	3.2
1910.....	2.7	3.1	3.4	3.6	2.6	3.0
1911.....	2.7	3.3	3.8	3.7	2.7	3.1
1912.....	2.6	3.0	3.5	3.4	2.7	3.0
1913.....	2.6	3.1	3.5	3.2	2.7	3.0
1914.....	2.5	3.0	3.3	3.2	2.6	2.9
1915.....	2.6	3.2	3.4	3.3	2.8	3.0

## BUTTER (POUNDS).

1890.....	3.7	3.8	4.4	3.7	3.4	3.9
1891.....	3.5	3.7	4.0	3.6	3.0	3.6
1892.....	3.4	3.6	4.0	3.6	3.1	3.6
1893.....	3.4	3.5	3.8	3.6	3.3	3.5
1894.....	3.7	3.7	4.1	3.7	3.4	3.8
1895.....	3.8	3.8	4.4	3.8	3.7	4.0
1896.....	4.0	3.9	4.7	3.9	3.8	4.2
1897.....	4.0	3.9	4.6	4.0	4.0	4.2
1898.....	3.9	3.9	4.5	4.0	3.7	4.1
1899.....	3.8	3.8	4.4	3.9	3.7	4.0
1900.....	3.6	3.8	4.1	4.0	3.7	3.8
1901.....	3.6	3.7	4.0	3.7	3.7	3.8
1902.....	3.3	3.5	3.8	3.4	3.4	3.5
1903.....	3.4	3.5	3.8	3.4	3.3	3.5

*Quantities of various commodities that could be bought at retail for \$1, 1890-1915—*  
Continued.

## BUTTER (POUNDS)—Continued.

Year.	North Atlantic.	South Atlantic.	North Central.	South Central.	Western.	United States.
1904.....	3.4	3.5	3.8	3.4	3.4	3.6
1905.....	3.3	3.4	3.7	3.3	3.2	3.4
1906.....	3.1	3.3	3.5	3.2	3.1	3.3
1907.....	2.9	3.0	3.3	2.9	2.7	3.0
1908.....	3.0	3.0	3.2	2.9	2.7	3.0
1909.....	2.8	2.9	3.1	2.6	2.6	2.9
1910.....	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.5	2.7
1911.....	2.9	2.9	3.1	2.9	2.6	2.9
1912.....	2.6	2.6	2.8	2.6	2.5	2.6
1913.....	2.5	2.5	2.8	2.6	2.5	2.6
1914.....	2.6	2.7	2.9	2.7	2.7	2.7
1915.....	2.7	2.7	2.9	2.8	2.8	2.8

## IRISH POTATOES (PECK).

Year.	North Atlantic.	South Atlantic.	North Central.	South Central.	Western.	United States.
1890.....	4.4	3.5	4.2	3.9	3.6	4.0
1891.....	4.2	3.3	3.7	3.5	4.0	3.8
1892.....	5.0	3.9	4.8	4.7	4.6	4.6
1893.....	4.3	3.3	3.9	3.7	4.1	3.9
1894.....	4.8	3.6	4.2	4.1	4.9	4.3
1895.....	5.3	3.9	4.9	4.5	5.2	4.8
1896.....	6.1	4.7	6.6	5.2	5.1	5.7
1897.....	5.0	3.9	5.3	4.3	5.1	4.7
1898.....	4.5	3.4	4.4	4.0	4.8	4.2
1899.....	5.0	3.7	5.1	4.2	3.6	4.6
1900.....	5.1	3.8	5.1	4.4	4.4	4.7
1901.....	4.2	3.2	3.7	3.6	3.8	3.8
1902.....	4.2	3.2	3.7	3.9	3.7	3.8
1903.....	4.2	3.4	3.8	3.7	4.1	3.8
1904.....	4.0	3.2	3.7	3.6	3.5	3.6
1905.....	4.5	3.5	4.0	3.8	4.0	4.0
1906.....	4.3	3.4	3.9	3.7	3.7	3.9
1907.....	4.2	3.2	3.8	3.4	3.3	3.7
1908.....	3.8	3.2	3.4	3.2	3.7	3.5
1909.....	3.8	3.2	3.4	3.3	3.2	3.5
1910.....	4.4	3.4	3.9	3.5	3.5	3.8
1911.....	3.6	2.6	2.9	2.7	2.7	3.0
1912.....	3.1	2.5	2.9	2.7	3.4	2.9
1913.....	3.9	3.2	4.1	3.4	4.8	3.9
1914.....	3.7	3.0	3.8	3.0	4.2	3.6
1915.....	4.5	3.9	5.1	3.6	4.1	4.4

## GRANULATED SUGAR (POUNDS).

Year.	North Atlantic.	South Atlantic.	North Central.	South Central.	Western.	United States.
1890.....	14.9	14.9	14.9	13.5	12.5	14.5
1891.....	17.5	16.9	16.9	15.4	14.1	16.7
1892.....	18.9	17.5	18.2	16.4	15.4	17.9
1893.....	17.5	16.7	17.2	16.4	14.9	16.9
1894.....	19.2	17.9	18.5	16.9	15.9	18.2
1895.....	19.6	18.9	18.9	17.5	16.9	18.9
1896.....	18.2	18.5	17.9	16.9	16.9	17.9
1897.....	18.5	18.9	18.2	17.2	16.7	17.9
1898.....	17.2	17.5	17.2	16.9	15.4	16.9
1899.....	17.5	17.2	16.9	16.9	16.1	16.9
1900.....	16.7	16.4	16.7	16.7	15.9	16.4
1901.....	16.9	16.7	16.9	17.2	15.9	16.7
1902.....	18.5	17.9	18.2	17.9	18.9	17.9
1903.....	18.2	17.9	18.2	17.9	16.9	17.9
1904.....	17.5	17.5	16.9	16.4	15.2	16.9
1905.....	16.7	16.7	16.9	16.4	15.4	16.7
1906.....	17.9	17.9	18.2	17.2	16.1	17.5
1907.....	17.5	17.5	17.9	16.9	15.9	17.2
1908.....	17.5	17.2	17.5	16.7	15.4	16.9
1909.....	17.5	17.5	17.5	16.9	15.6	16.9
1910.....	16.9	17.2	16.9	16.7	15.2	16.7
1911.....	15.6	15.9	15.6	15.4	15.2	16.4
1912.....	16.1	15.9	16.1	15.9	14.9	15.9
1913.....	18.5	18.9	18.2	18.2	16.9	18.2
1914.....	17.5	17.2	16.9	16.9	15.9	16.9
1915.....	15.6	15.6	15.2	15.2	14.3	15.2



Mr. NOLAN. You have not touched upon the minimum-wage section, Mr. Stewart. Would you like to say anything in regard to the question of a minimum wage of \$3 per day for those employees who now receive low salaries?

Mr. STEWART. I would not want to attempt to raise a family in the District of Columbia, or anywhere else, on less than that. I certainly do not want to ask a man to do what I would not dare to tackle myself. It is unfair to ask these men to work for \$660 a year. That is the lowest salary we pay, but, of course, there are bureaus that pay less than that amount. As I said before, we can not increase the salaries of those men who receive \$660 per annum. The only method that I know of by which they can be increased is the passage of a flat minimum-wage law, or some other act of Congress.

Mr. NOLAN. The fact of the matter is that a great many of these men are paid out of a lump-sum appropriation and the limitations of the executive departments regarding lump-sum appropriations prohibit them from raising salaries, in case they desire to do so.

Mr. STEWART. Not so much, Mr. Chairman, if they are paid out of a lump-sum appropriation as if their salaries are fixed in the bill on the statutory roll.

Mr. NOLAN. What I had reference to is this: You are prohibited, where there is a salary provided on the statutory roll, from raising a man's salary; and then, in any other department where the lump-sum appropriation applies, you can not raise them. In other words, you are blocked at every turn. The only way you can get relief is through legislation of this character.

Mr. STEWART. That is quite true. I think \$3 a day is little enough for any man in the District of Columbia to work for.

Mr. NOLAN. What have you to say in that regard as to the whole service?

Mr. STEWART. So far as I know it would apply to anyone in the service. Of course this bill will affect more people in the District than anywhere else. That is why I brought down the figures of cost for Washington. It seemed to me that it affected more people here than elsewhere. Of course, the laborers in the navy yards and arsenals are intended to be covered by this, I suppose.

Mr. NOLAN. Yes. They have also been entirely overlooked by the Navy Department and the War Department, as has been testified to here by a man who has been 23 years in the Brooklyn Navy Yard.

Mr. STEWART. I think the Rock Island Arsenal, at Rock Island, Ill., when the eight-hour day went into effect was paying some of the men less than \$1 a day. I think there have been some increases since, but nothing that would come anywhere near touching this minimum.

Mr. NOLAN. I want to say that the committee is very grateful to you for the time you have given it, because you have given us some information that we have been seeking ever since the hearing started. I am sure it will prove of value not alone to the subcommittee but to the committee as a whole. We hope it will have some effect on the Members of the House.

Mr. STEWART. I thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am only too glad to be helpful in any way.

With the foregoing facts before us regarding the tremendous advance in prices of the bare necessities of life as they affect the poorer-paid employees of the Government, and the further fact that the annual appropriations of the Government of the United States have increased from \$457,088,344.72 in 1896 to \$1,114,937,012.02 in 1916, due largely to the fact that all of the great executive departments have from year to year been called upon to meet increasing prices for materials of all kinds necessary in the conduct of the Government's business, and this is particularly true of the Army and the Navy, where millions of dollars are spent annually for rations, and the Government has met this increase without complaint, but in all this time no attention has been given in a legislative way, and very little in an administrative way, to the wants and needs of the human element involved in the conduct of this great Government machine. The workers, and particularly those receiving the lowest salaries, have been almost entirely overlooked. Particular attention is called to the fact that thousands and thousands of these employees are working to-day at salaries that were established in

1854, and this has been largely the basis for fixing and determining the salaries of employees in similar employment since that date.

Members of Congress and others may argue against this measure because it involves millions of dollars of increased expenditures. It has been estimated by Mr. H. M. McLarin, president of the Federal Employees Union, that the increased expenditures if this bill passes will amount to \$3,812,000 in the District of Columbia, affecting 12,840 employees, or a total of \$24,524,000 affecting 200,000 employees. This estimate is based upon statistics compiled by the Bureau of the Census and which are published in Bulletin No. 94, entitled "Statistics of Employees—Executive Civil Service of the United States—1907." But whatever the cost, this is a case of justice long delayed, and as we are compelled to meet increasing prices yearly for all materials and commodities for the official conduct of our great governmental establishment, Congress at this time should give consideration to the human beings employed by this Government and from whom it expects honest and efficient service.

The statistics submitted by Mr. McLarin are as follows:

\* \* \* The total number of persons employed in the executive civil service of the United States, exclusive of the Army, Navy, 62,663 postmasters, 18,376 mechanics and laborers at navy yards and stations, 12,850 post-office clerks at offices not having free delivery, and 1,031 employees of the Weather Bureau, with a number of special and exceptional employees not properly to be classified with other employees by reason of the method of their appointment or employment, is 185,874.

The Official Register for 1915 gives the number as 488,711, including all employees in the Postal Service, the legislative and judicial branches of the Federal Government.

For statistical purposes, and to avoid complicated computations, this number may be considered as in round numbers who will in the percentages given below be beneficiaries of the Nolan minimum-wage bill, 200,000.

The percentages given in Bulletin 94 of the census, 1907, page 32, table 20, for the various rates of pay are:

Aggregate: Less than \$720 per annum, 19 per cent; \$720 but less than \$840, 11.7 per cent; \$840 but less than \$900, 5.7 per cent; \$900 but less than \$1,000, 23.6 per cent. District of Columbia: Less than \$720 per annum, 25.6 per cent; \$720 but less than \$840, 8.8 per cent; \$840 but less than \$900, 2.4 per cent; \$900 but less than \$1,000, 6 per cent.

Elsewhere: Less than \$720 per annum, 18 per cent; \$720 but less than \$840, 12.2 per cent; \$840 but less than \$900, 6.2 per cent; \$900 but less than \$1,000, 26.3 per cent.

As these percentages do cover nearly 200,000 of the employees of the United States in the executive civil service on July 1, 1907, they may be taken as fairly representative of the percentages of the salaries paid at the present time, and may be applied with reasonable accuracy to the whole Government executive civil service. The percentage of employees receiving the lower salaries would be much less in the legislative and judicial branches of the Government than in the executive branch, as the salaries in the legislative and judicial branches are much higher in those cases where the employees' whole time is devoted to the Government work.

It is worthy of note that the percentage of employees receiving less than \$720 per annum of the District of Columbia is 25.6 per cent, as compared with 18 per cent of the employees working elsewhere who receive less than \$720 per annum. As a rule, the employees in the District of Columbia devote their whole working day throughout the year to the Government service, as is not the case in a great many of the positions outside of Washington.

According to these percentages, the increases in pay under the first section of this bill would affect 60 per cent of the employees of the United States in the executive civil service; 62.7 per cent of the employees outside of the District of Columbia would receive increases, and the pay of but 42.8 per cent of the employees in the District would be increased.

The cost to the United States involved in the first section of this bill is estimated as follows:

Employees now receiving less than \$720 per annum would receive an increase of not less than \$360.

Employees now receiving less than \$840 per annum would receive an increase of not less than \$240.

Employees now receiving less than \$900 per annum would receive an increase of not less than \$180.

Employees now receiving less than \$1,000 per annum would receive an increase of not less than \$80.

The total numbers and amounts of the increases would be:

## AGGREGATE.

[200,000 employees.]

Per cent.	Employees, number affected.	Rates now paid.	Amounts of increases not less than—	Totals.
19.0.....	38,000	Less than \$720.....	\$360	\$13,080,000
11.7.....	23,400	\$720-\$840.....	240	5,616,000
5.7.....	11,400	\$840-\$900.....	180	2,052,000
23.6.....	47,200	\$900-\$1,000.....	80	3,776,000
60.0.....	120,000		<sup>1</sup> 204	24,524,000

## IN DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

[30,000 employees.]

25.6.....	7,680	Less than \$720....	\$360	\$2,904,800
8.8.....	2,640	\$720-\$840.....	240	633,600
2.4.....	720	\$840-\$900.....	180	129,600
6.0.....	1,800	\$900-\$1,000.....	80	144,000
42.8.....	12,840		<sup>1</sup> 297	3,812,000

## ELSEWHERE.

[170,000 employees.]

18.0.....	30,600	Less than \$720....	\$360	\$11,016,000
12.2.....	20,740	\$720-\$840.....	240	4,977,600
6.2.....	10,540	\$840-\$900.....	180	1,897,200
26.3.....	44,710	\$900-\$1,000.....	80	3,576,800
62.7.....	106,590		<sup>1</sup> 201	21,467,600

<sup>1</sup> Average increase.

It is to be noted that these figures do not include employees of the legislative and judicial branches of the service, nor postmasters, mechanics, and laborers at navy yards and stations, and certain other special or technical employees. As a rule the employees excepted from this estimate will be found to receive considerably more than \$1,080 per annum, and many are not wholly occupied in the Government service. The reason for this has been stated to be that they are much more prominent politically than the employees in the executive branch of the service.

Especial attention is invited to the fact that an extremely large proportion of the employees receiving less than even \$720 per annum are of the District of Columbia, a place in which the cost of living is notoriously high.

The benefits of the increases provided in this bill, however, apply to only about 12,000, or nearly one-half of the employees of the United States in the District of Columbia, while 106,590 of the employees outside of the District of Columbia will be the recipients of increased pay under the first section of this bill. Those in the District of Columbia will get \$3,812,000 more pay per annum than at present, while those outside of the District of Columbia will get \$21,467,600 more pay per annum than at present.

So, gentlemen, you see that we are pleading not only for ourselves, but for more than a hundred thousand of your constituents.

\* \* \* \* \*

Because this bill, if passed, will mean many millions of dollars in increased appropriations some Members of Congress might say that it will not set very well with the "people back home." But when



they are informed that it means considerable less than the price of two battle cruisers or two dreadnaughts, a number of which will be provided for at this Congress and for which there is urgent need, the "people back home" will not find any fault, but will be entirely in sympathy with the movement to place the employees of the Government in a position to have a living wage, so that they may live decently and respectably and have a kindly feeling for their employer, and that their children may have a fair chance in this life and that they, too, will have respect and a truly patriotic feeling for the country of their birth.

For years efforts have been made to regulate child labor, and it was only recently that this House passed a child-labor bill. That measure affects the great industries of this country; it removes the long existing practice of exploiting the child of tender years in the factories, mines, and workshops of our Nation. The Members of this House believed that those children should be in school and should have the opportunity to build up their minds and bodies under healthful conditions. Is it not equally our duty toward the low-paid Government employee to see that he has a sufficient wage to enable him to bring up his children under decent and healthful conditions of mind and body?

This measure will foster true Americanism and is one of the few sound measures of preparedness that the Sixty-fourth Congress has had placed before it.

There may be some who will say that \$3 per day is too high a rate for the men and women employed by the Government. But would they like to labor for or try to raise a family and live on that or less? Wages of the unskilled laborers all over the country have been advancing, and they are not far from this rate. Strikes and walk-outs are taking place among the unorganized unskilled workers all over the country for advances in wages to meet increased prices, and this will continue until the low-paid workers in industry are given greater consideration.

The underpaid Government employees are mostly unorganized, but even where they are organized they do not strike to have their grievances adjusted. They depend upon the Government or Congress to treat them fairly; and here is our opportunity, though long delayed, to make the Government of the United States the model employer.

In striking contrast with this Government's treatment of its employees is that of Denmark, as shown in the following extract from our consul general, E. D. Winslow, at Copenhagen:

[Extract from report of Consul General E. D. Winslow, Copenhagen, Denmark, Feb. 4, 1916. Printed in Supplement to Commerce Reports No. 4a, Mar. 29, 1916.]

#### DENMARK.

As the hardships of the war fell most heavily on those having fixed incomes and salaries, the Government has increased the salaries of its employees to meet the higher cost of living.

The printed record of the hearings before the subcommittee contain a number of heartrending stories of Government employees who have worked in different departments for a number of years. They tell of their struggle for existence; how the family has had to depend upon neighbors and others for charity, and in some instances were

not able to purchase any new clothing for a period covering seven or eight years; and others testified that they had not entered a moving-picture show or other place of amusement in four years.

Statements were made by individuals and those representing organizations of employees of conditions in the Government service, where employees were compelled to work overtime without extra compensation; also, complaints about favoritism shown in the matter of promotions, where length of service did not receive consideration; of misrepresentation by correspondence schools and others of the advantages afforded the Government employee. But your committee could not consider these complaints, as the bill before it pertained only to the question of salaries, and therefore confined itself to the subject matter of the bill.

It is the belief of your committee that this is the first time in the history of this Government that the true conditions as affecting the cost of living of its low-salaried employees has ever been brought to the attention of any committee of Congress and so thoroughly investigated as has been the case in this instance.

The committee was not unanimous on the amendment striking out section 2 of the original bill, some members holding the opinion that more attention should be given at this time to those employees receiving over \$1,080 per annum, and that a percentage advance should be provided for, those favoring the striking out of section 2 being of the opinion that the lower-paid employees should be considered at this time and that the matter of a general readjustment of salaries above the \$1,080 grade should be made the subject of another bill for future consideration.

The passage of this bill will have a tendency to bring into the Government service the very highest type of young men and young women to fill the vacancies in the lower grades and will give the Government the first choice in the labor market as against private employers, thus tending to make the Government service highly efficient, for, after all, well-paid workers do their work efficiently and economically. Cheap work is always poor work, and with the right standard set the Government will profit by stimulating interest on the part of its employees.





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